

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A grate furnace, comprising:

a grate including a plurality of movable grate steps movable in a longitudinal direction of said grate in a stoking movement direction, said grate further comprising at least one stationary grate step between every second one longitudinally adjacent pair of said movable grate steps along a longitudinal direction of said grate is movable in a stoking movement direction, wherein others of said grate steps between said every second one of said grate steps are stationary;

drive devices respectively arranged in an area of an underblast chamber areas of underblast chambers under said grate for moving said moveable grate steps; and

a housing corresponding to each of the underblast areas, each housing corresponding to one of said drive devices for protecting said drive devices and arranged between said drive devices and said grate, each of said housings comprising a separate housing chamber for each of said drive devices arranged under said grate, said housing each of said housings comprising a first longitudinal section and a second longitudinal section, said first longitudinal section being enclosed in the underblast chamber and said second longitudinal section being partially enclosed in the underblast chamber and being open toward a bottom such that said second longitudinal area is accessible from underneath.

13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) The grate furnace of claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein each said separate housing chambers comprises thermal insulation.

15. (currently amended) The grate furnace of claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein each said separate housing chambers receives forced ventilation.

16. (previously presented) The grate furnace of claim 12, wherein said underblast chamber supplies primary air to said grate in a flow direction, said housing being streamlined relative to said flow direction.

17. (currently amended) The grate furnace of claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein said grate comprises a grate inclination and said housing chambers are staggered relative to each other relative to said grate inclination.

18. (currently amended) The grate furnace of claim 12, wherein each of said drive devices is connected to two of said moveable grate steps.

19. (currently amended) The grate furnace of claim 12, wherein each of said drive devices comprises at least one hydraulic cylinder/piston unit including a piston rod, a push rod

connected to said piston rod, and a carriage connected to at least one moveable grate step, wherein said push rod is sealingly guided through a wall of said housing.

20. (previously presented) The grate furnace of claim 19, wherein said piston rod is connected to said push rod by an articulation.

21. (previously presented) The grate furnace of claim 19, wherein said each of said drive devices further comprises guide tracks running parallel to said stoking movement direction for guiding said carriage, said housing comprising separate housing chambers for each of said drive devices, and said guide tracks being arranged above said housing chamber of an adjacent one of said drive devices.

22. (currently amended) The grate furnace of claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein said housing is connected to the underblast chamber by an opening, said housing comprising a flap for selectively closing said opening.

23.-24. (canceled)

25. (new) A grate furnace, comprising:

a grate including a plurality of movable grate steps movable in a longitudinal direction of said grate in a stoking movement direction, said grate further comprising at least one stationary grate step between every longitudinally adjacent pair of said movable grate steps;

an underblast enclosure defining an underblast chamber for directing air toward said grate;

drive devices proximate said underblast chamber under said grate arranged and dimensioned for moving said moveable grate steps; and

a housing arranged for protecting said drive devices arranged between said drive devices and said grate, said housing comprising a first longitudinal section and a second longitudinal section, said first longitudinal section of said housing being surrounded by said underblast enclosure and said second longitudinal section being partially surrounded by said underblast enclosure and such that said second longitudinal area is open toward the bottom, said second longitudinal section being sufficiently open toward the bottom for allowing access to said drive devices for maintenance and replacement of said drive devices.